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MSHA begins collaboration with mining industry on dust rule implementation

ARLINGTON, Va. – As part of its efforts to assure smooth implementation of the [new coal mine respirable dust rule](#), the U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration is forming a cooperative partnership with coal mine operators and miners. Through this collaboration, MSHA will provide the mining industry with technical assistance on administering the sampling requirements and complying with the rule, as well as a forum where operators can exchange their own best practices and best methods for getting coal dust controls in place.

On April 23, [MSHA announced the release of the final rule](#) to lower miners’ exposure to respirable coal mine dust in all underground and surface coal mines. The rule, published May 1 in the Federal Register, continues the department’s efforts through the [End Black Lung – Act Now!](#) campaign to end black lung disease, a debilitating, deadly yet preventable illness that affects coal miners and their families.

“MSHA has made a commitment to help coal operators be as informed as they can be, and we have asked industry and labor to join with us to get a jump-start on implementation,” said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “This approach is consistent with the congressional request that MSHA address compliance assistance, training and post-implementation needs in connection with the rule.”

On April 24, MSHA met with stakeholders at its headquarters in Arlington to highlight the major provisions of the rule, its new requirements and effective dates. During that meeting, Main formally extended an invitation to operators to join the cooperative effort.

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